



woodland vole

Microtus pinetorum

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Chordata - vertebrates
Class: Mammalia
Order: Rodentia
Family: Muridae

Features

The woodland vole is three to four inches long. It has a red-brown body with a lighter belly. The claws on the front feet are larger than the ones on the back feet. The tail is very short and the eyes are tiny.

Natural History

The woodland vole lives on the forest floor in woods with oaks, hickories, and maples. It also lives in roadside vegetation, orchards, pastures, and weedy fields. It eats berries, roots, nuts, seeds, wild onions, and a variety of green plants. It is active day and night. This vole uses burrows under the soil that it digs or that were dug by other small mammals. It digs with the front feet, using the hind feet to push the loose soil behind it. The head is used to push loose dirt out of the burrow. The nest is built in a burrow or under an object on the ground that can be reached by a branch of the burrow. Several woodland voles may use the same nest. Two mating seasons occur in a year with young born from March through April and August through November. Litter size is two or three.

Young are helpless at birth but develop rapidly and live on their own at about age three weeks. Sexual maturity is attained between two and three months of age.

Habitats

bottomland forests; wet prairies and fens

Iowa Status

uncommon; native

Iowa Range

scattered throughout Iowa in suitable habitats

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.